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# MONTANA OUTDOORS

# Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

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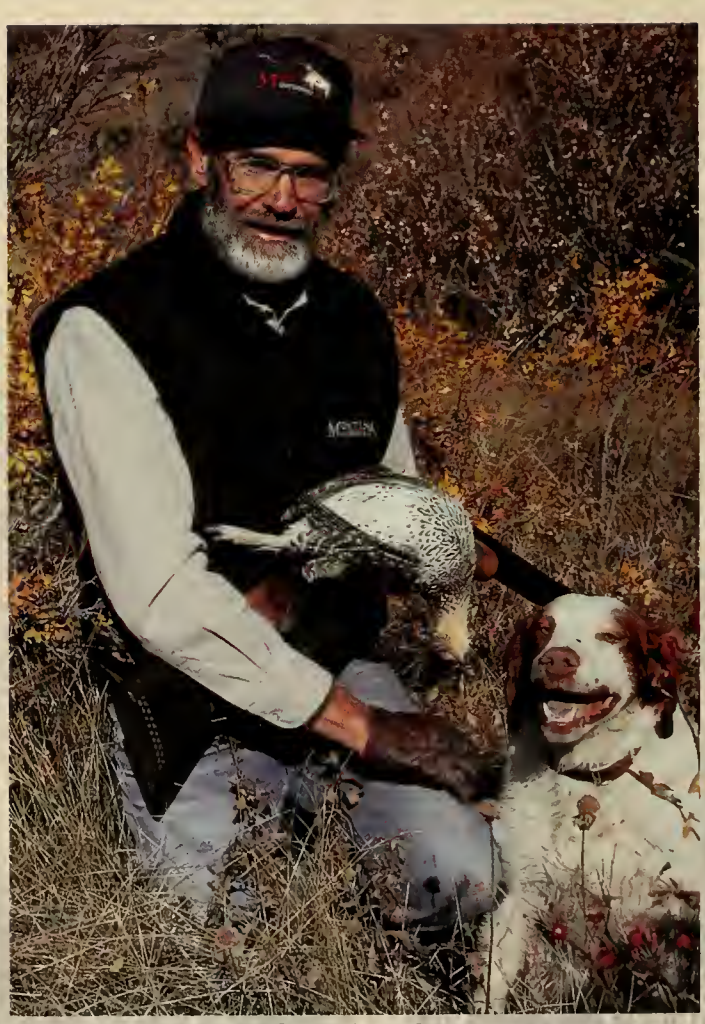
Saw-whet owl by Tim Christie

**Back Cover**
Bobcat by Conrad Rowe©



*Dave Brooks*

JOHN LAMBING

MONTANA OUTDOORS
JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2002 VOLUME 33, NUMBER 1

When I accepted a job as editor of *Montana Outdoors* in May of 1978, I had no idea what the future might hold. I was humbled at the prospect of editing an award-winning conservation magazine, and honored to be part of the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks family. I was consumed with the challenge of meeting that first printing deadline; retirement wasn't even a blip on the radar screen. Now, almost 24 years (and more than 140 deadlines) later, I'm still excited when each issue rolls off the press, and just as honored to work for Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks. But time has a way of moving on, and the time has come for me to fish and hunt more, and work less—something my boss claims will be an impossibility!

So, this twenty-first Special Photo Issue will be my last as editor. Groucho the Brittany and Jenny the black Lab are ecstatic; they see more trips in the truck to exotic, bird-filled locales in their future. As for me, I hope the years ahead hold plenty of sunlit days afield with camera, shotgun, and fishing rod. On rainy days, I plan to spend time at the computer writing stories for this and other magazines.

Because of you—our loyal readers—the last 24 years have been wonderful. I've appreciated each letter, each phone call, and each encouraging word. Thanks for everything, and I'll see you out among Montana's fish, wildlife, and parks.

Dave Books
Editor

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JOHN LOWING

East of Fort Benton, the White Cliffs of the Missouri (top) cast a golden glow on the river's quiet waters. More than 100 miles downstream, sprawling Fort Peck Lake (above) supports a popular fishery, complete with lunker walleyes.

CHUCK HANEY

Alpine wildflowers decorate the landscape near Logan Pass in Glacier National Park. Opposite, a black bear peers through a field of dandelions.

DONALD M. JONES

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JOHN LAMBING

At left, a river otter lunches on a trout, while a Labrador retriever poses with a mallard drake. Above, sunrise illuminates Ear Mountain Wildlife Management Area west of Choteau.

DONALD M. JONES

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Elk camp: a proud Montana tradition.

CHUCK HANEY

On June 4, 1805, Captain William Clark and the Corps of Discovery observed "several herds of buffalo, some mule-deer, antelopes, and wolves" near the mouth of the Marias River. Later that summer as the party ascended the Beaverhead River, Sacagawea recognized Beaverhead Rock (opposite) near the present-day town of Dillon. She knew then that her people, the Shoshone, were close at hand.

CHUCK HANEY

Rainbow trout and autumn colors add up to a perfect day on the Yellowstone River south of Livingston.

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WILLIAM R MONROE

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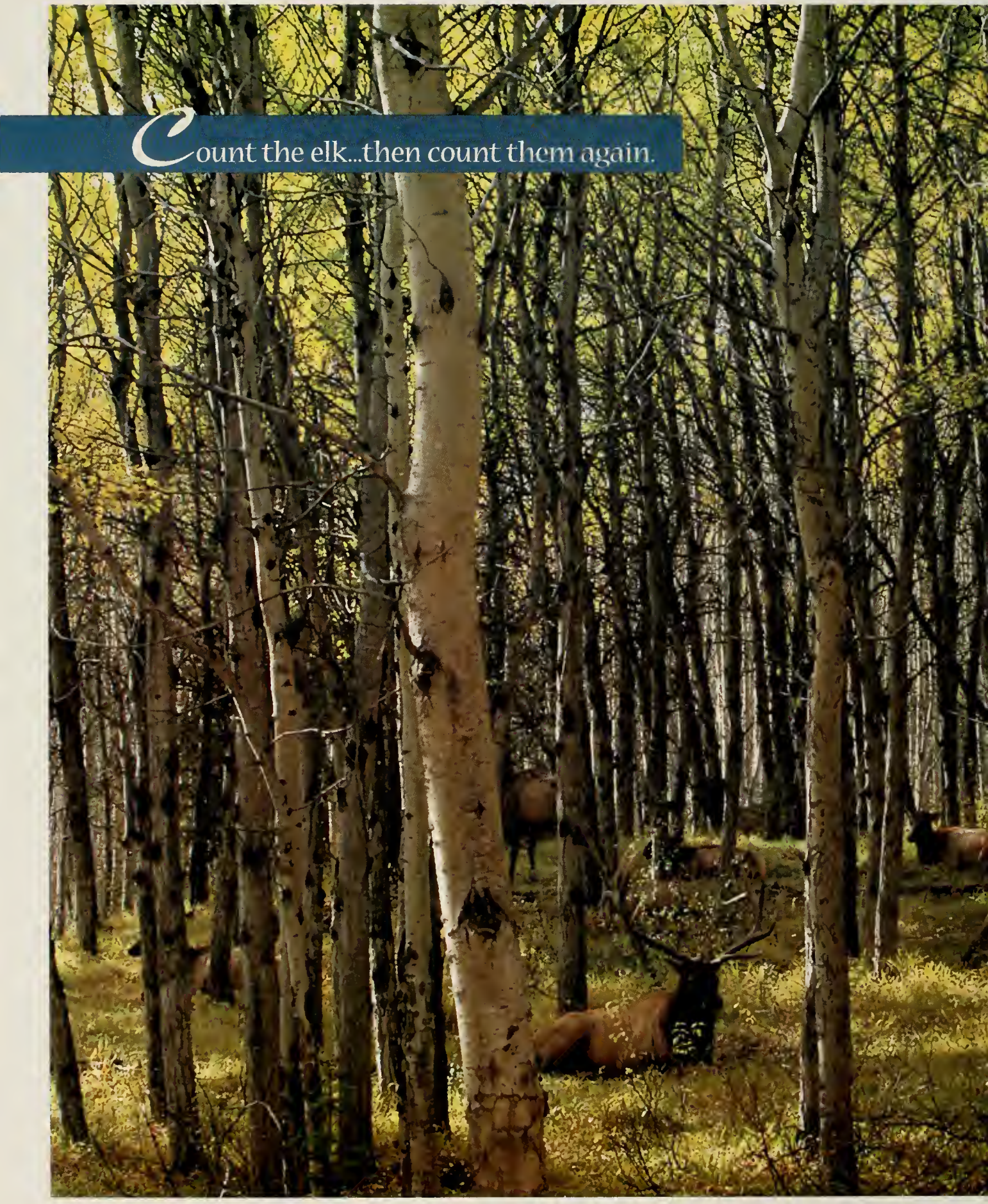
A buck in velvet rests in a field of wildflowers, while a pair of western bluebirds discuss lunch from their perch on a woolly mullein. On the opposite page, a goldenrod spider hunts insects amid phacelia blossoms.

TIM CHRISTIE

The Rocky Mountain Front extends southward from Glacier National Park, providing a buffer zone and a life-support system for the region's fabled wildlife treasures. Rocky crags provide sanctuary for bighorn sheep and mountain goats, while timbered slopes offer freedom to roam for grizzlies, wolves, deer, elk, and mountain lions.

PATRICK T. HALLINAN/BIGSKYIMAGES.COM


Count the elk...then count them again.

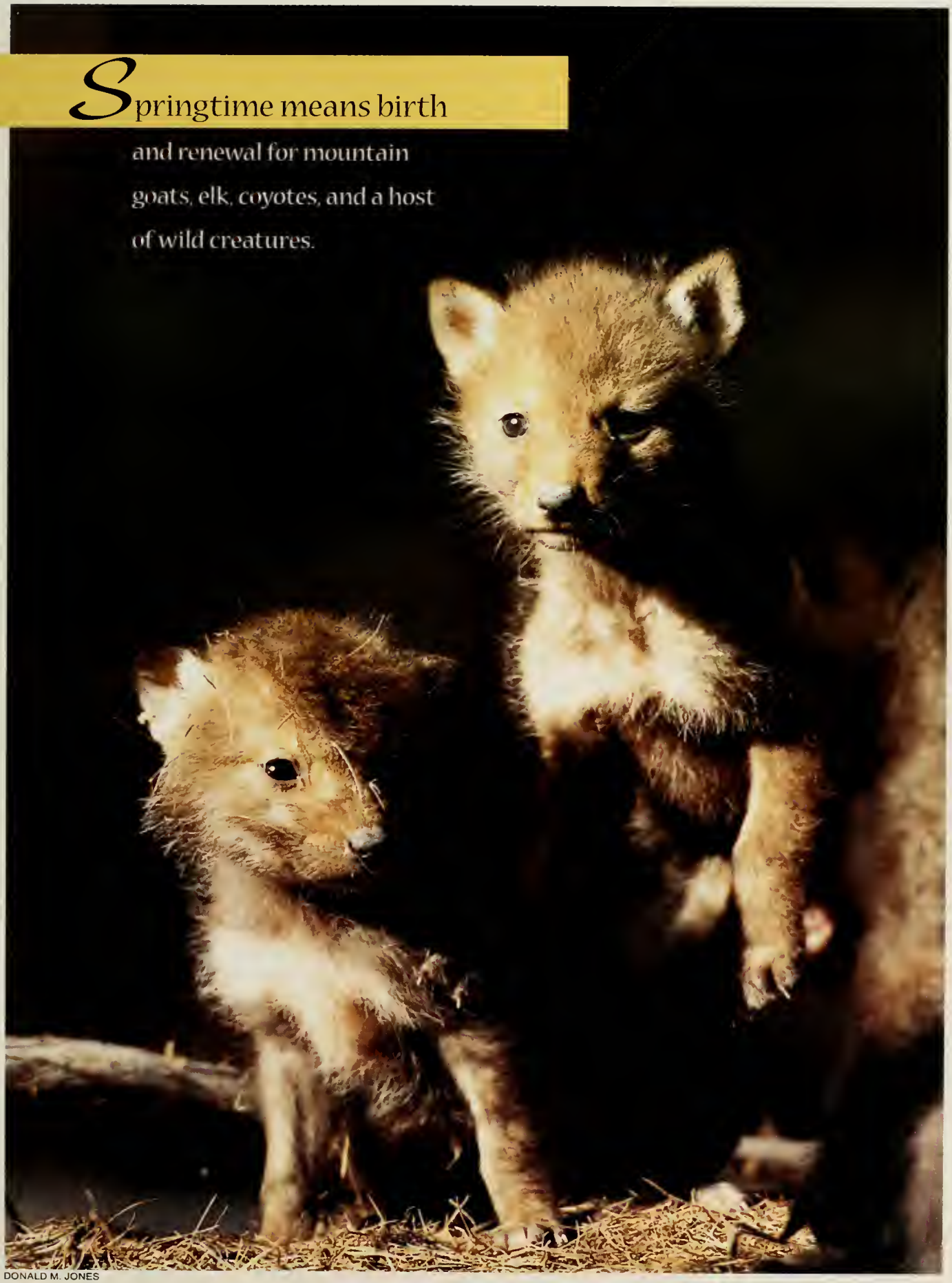
W STEVE SHERMAN

DONALD M. JONES

D. ROBERT FRANZ

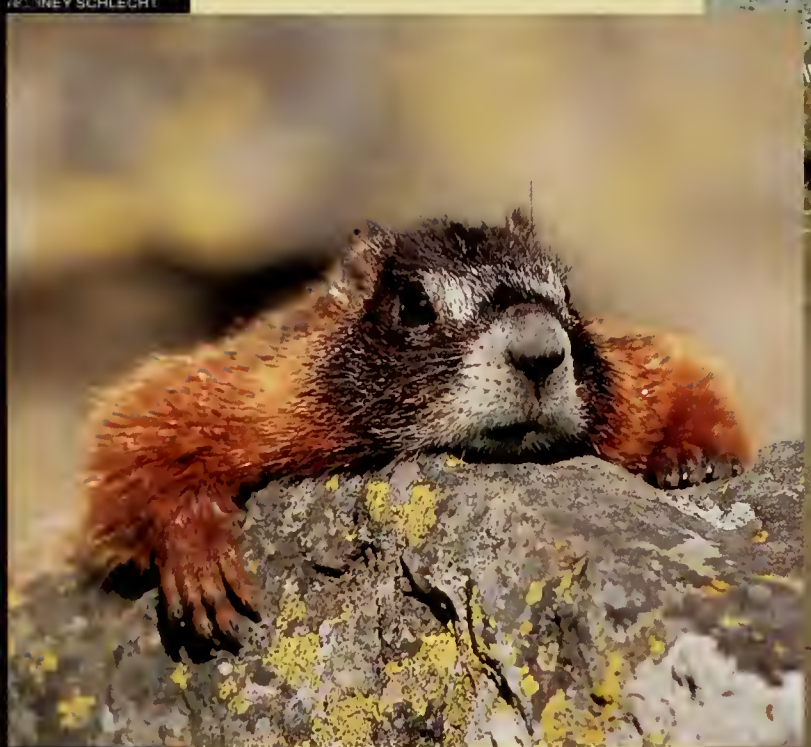
# Springtime means birth

and renewal for mountain goats, elk, coyotes, and a host of wild creatures.



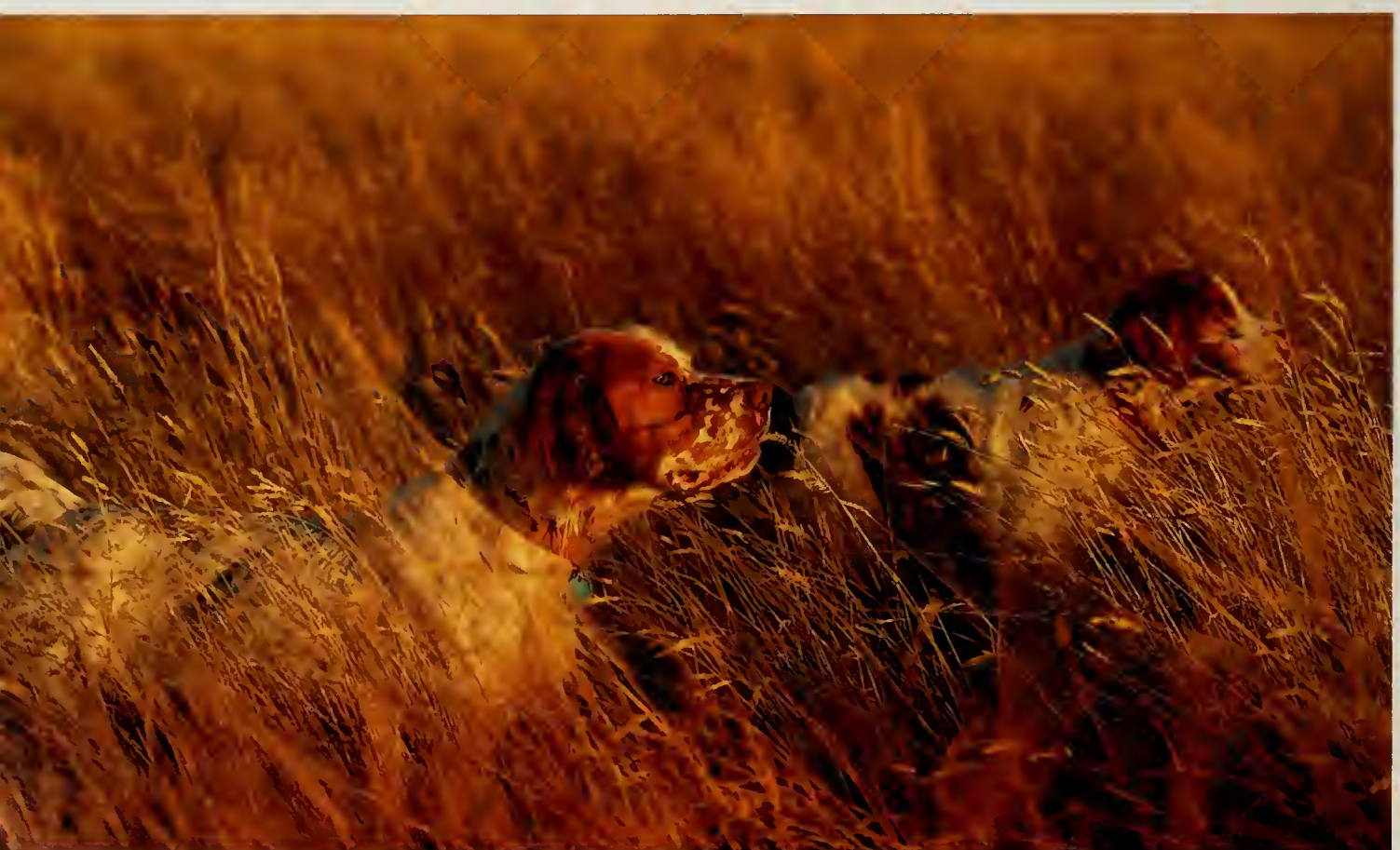
DONALD M. JONES

A spring snow dusts historic buildings at Bannack State Park west of Dillon. Below, a yellow-bellied marmot reclines on a lichen-covered rock.



NELSON KENTER

At right, a bird hunter delivers last-minute instructions to his attentive pupil. Below, an English setter honors a Brittany's point.



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Broomed-off horns bear testimony to the fierce head-butting ritual of bighorn rams in rut. At right, a bull moose samples streamside cuisine. On the opposite page, a whitetail buck steps from the shadows of a fern-carpeted glade.

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DONALD M. JONES

JOHN LAMBING

A pair of lonely cottonwoods provide the only shade for miles on rolling prairie near Melville in Sweetgrass County. Below, a bison calf stands belly-deep in grass and flowers on the National Bison Range at Moiese.

DONALD M. JONES

TIM CHRISTIE

**happiness** a: a state of well-being and contentment. b: a clear stream, a sunny morning, and a rainbow trout.

AL TROTH

Its bill still wet from probing
for invertebrates, a
common snipe wades
in shallow water.

RANDY SMITH

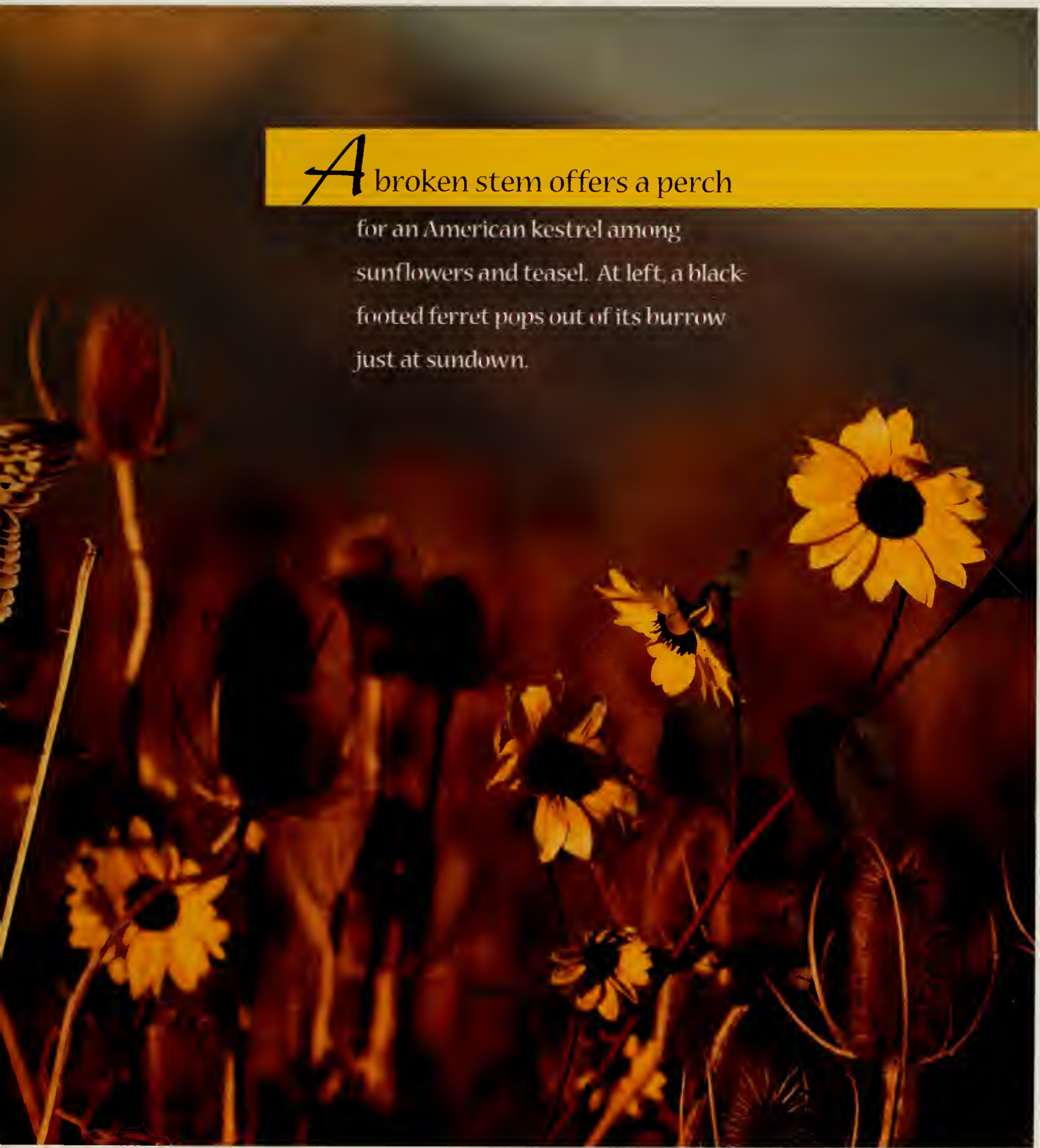
DONALD M. JONES

DONALD M. JONES

RICHARD MOUSEL

**Opposite page: An American dipper cools its heels** in a tumbling stream, while a whitetail buck poses amid golden aspens. Above, an angler stalks trout surrounded by autumn finery.

D. ROBERT FRANZ



A broken stem offers a perch for an American kestrel among sunflowers and teasel. At left, a black-footed ferret pops out of its burrow just at sundown.

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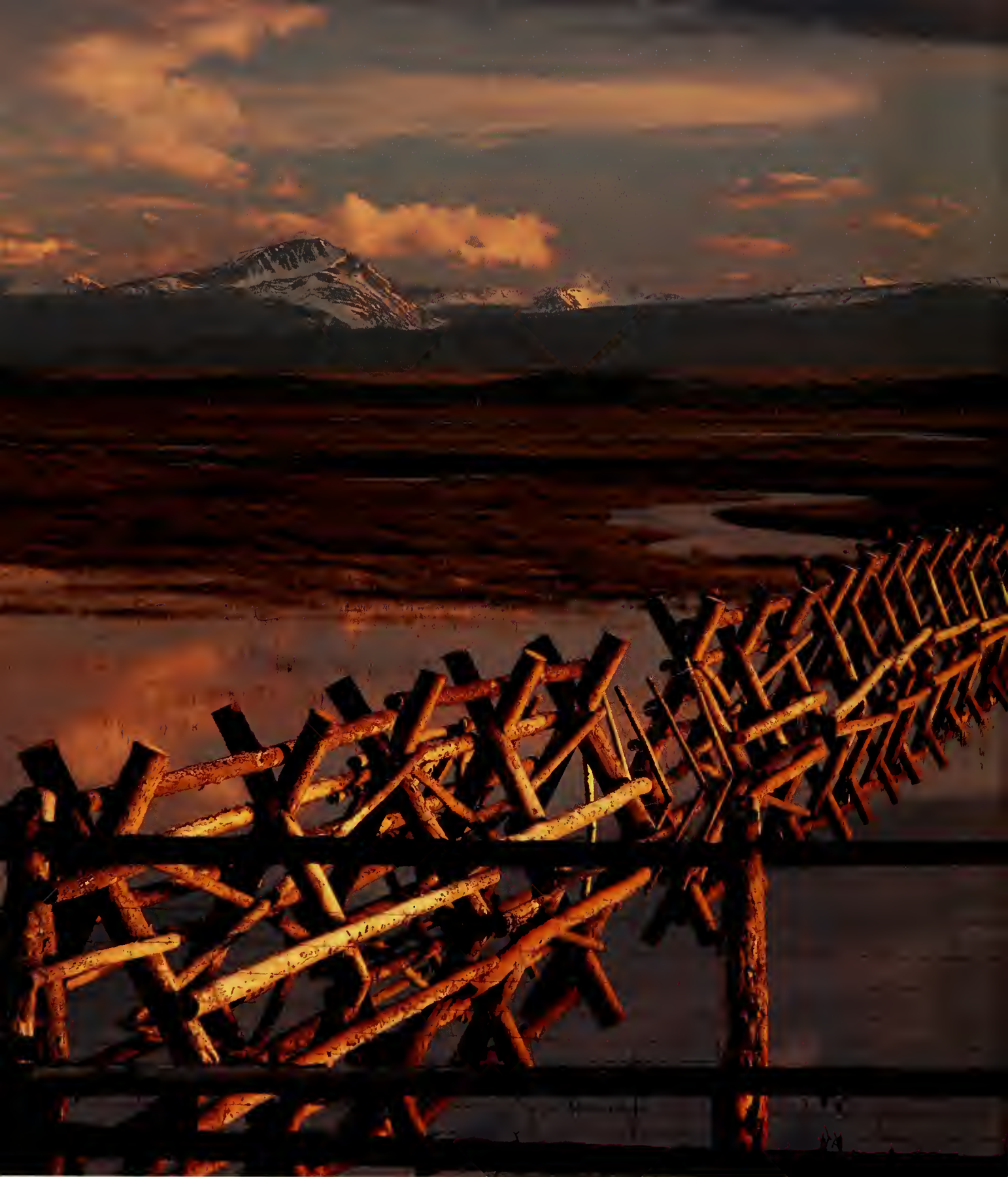
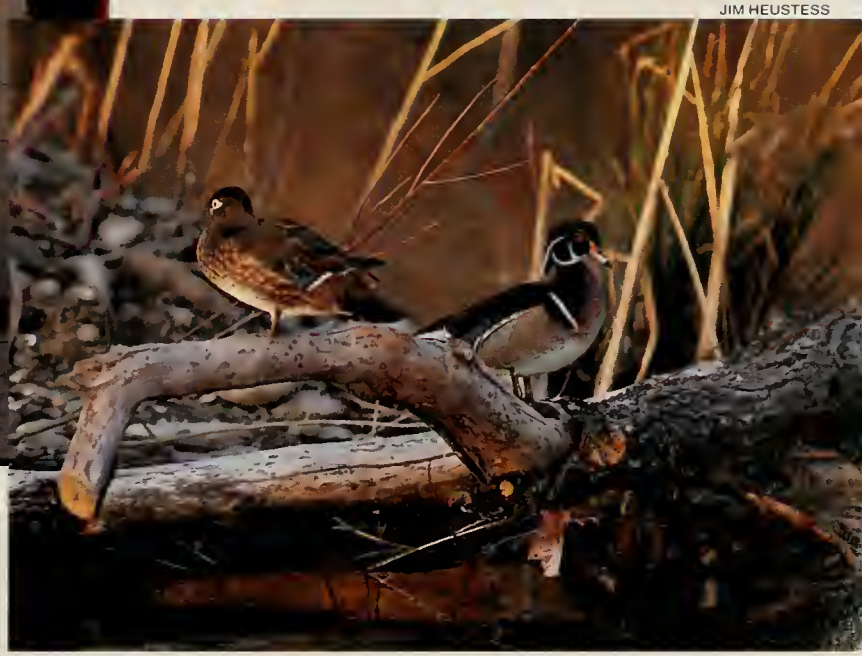


MARK C. BOESCH

A jack-leg fence stretches across the Big Hole Valley near Wisdom. Below, a pair of wood ducks rest on a cottonwood log at the Lee Metcalf National Wildlife Refuge east of Stevensville.

JIM HEUSTESS



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